

Methodist Church in Britain Web Map

User Guide

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1. Introductory Note

The new Methodist Web Map is designed to help people throughout the Methodist Church and our partner organisations to be more informed and equipped to do the many things which make up the mission priorities of our churches today.

The map uses postcode data, the results of the October Statistics for Mission count in the Methodist Church (an annual census of our membership, attendance and some church activities), and data held by other organisations (the Office for National Statistics, the Church of England, partner charities) to link this data together and present it in a way which helps everyone to understand more about our churches, the people they serve, and the communities in which they are located.

The map can be used at a very focused level, taking in the area of one or two churches and their communities, or at a much wider level, looking at multi-district areas. It should help to be a decision making tool, as a resource for finding out more, and as a way of inspiring questions (and answering some) which our churches may have about their communities and the wider Church.

The web map can be developed in any way the Church finds most useful. It is not a finished product, and as such we would welcome any suggestions about new data we might add, different functions we might develop, and different ways things might be done. Please email these to StatisticsForMission@MethodistChurch.org.uk. This user guide should give you the basic tools to begin using the web map. As the map develops, so this guidance will change to adapt.

We hope the map is useful to you and that it can help your community to engage with the statistics which might support your work. Don't forget that the Statistics for Mission data collected each year is reported in a large range of ways, including charts, excel spreadsheets and dynamic graphs. All these are available on the main church website at www.methodist.org.uk/statisticsformission.

If you need any more specific help with church data, do feel free to contact the Research and Statistics team at Methodist Church House using the email address above or via the Helpdesk on 020 7486 5502.

Christopher Stephens

Connexional Research and Statistics Coordinator

2. Basic Functions

The following sections should allow you to make use of the basic functions in the web map. Because of the amount of data on the map, it can take some time to get used to the way it works and to find the specific thing you want to see. It is worth reading this guidance as an introduction, and exploring the map yourself to work out how you best want to use it.

2.1 Visiting the map for the first time – the different parts of the map screen

When you go to the map web page for the first time, you will see a basic map with two parts to it. On the right is the **main map image** and on the left is a column with text. The right hand part will display what you choose to see and the left hand part will allow you to control the content of the image – what sorts of data are shown, which churches and which areas. The left hand side is the **map controller**, which contains a series of headings, options and boxes which you select, unselect or write into, which will allow you to control what the map displays.

On start-up, the map screen will display a simple map covering most of Britain, marked with Methodist District boundaries. On the left you will see that the site has selected for you the Methodist Boundaries option, and within this the Methodist Districts option. No other data is shown at this stage.

From here you can use the various functions on the left hand side to explore the map, or zoom and drag the map in the map box itself.

2.2 Zooming and dragging the map manually

The map box on the right hand side can be manipulated in the same way as any common web map, such as Google or Bing. Use the scale and the arrows on the left part of the map image to control the zoom level and to move in any direction. Alternatively, by clicking your mouse and dragging the map you can move it to your chosen location. Double clicking the mouse over the map will zoom in closer on the point you click.

2.3 Choosing your map

On the top of the map box on the right hand side, there is a gray tab that indicates the type of map you are seeing (underneath any of the data you choose to put onto it). It will automatically load the map most likely to be of use (Bing Road Map) but you can select different types of map if you want to know about other features of the places you are exploring (such as topography) or if you want a simple background (such as greyscale and no roads). Change the map by clicking on this tab and picking from the options that appear.

2.4 Main ways of exploring the map

There are three main ways of examining the data available on the web map. These are:

- ‘Browse the Map by Data Type’
- ‘Districts/Circuits’ function
- ‘Search’ function

You can select each of these, which are explained in the next parts of this guidance, by clicking the + sign on the corresponding grey bars across the map controller column on the left hand side of the screen. When you first load the map, the ‘Browse map by data type’ function will automatically be selected and expanded into the map controller.

3 Browse the Map by Data Type

There are three main ways of examining the data available on the web map using the map controller column on the left hand side of the screen. When you first open the web page, already selected is the ‘Browse Map by Data Type’ option. The grey bars at the bottom of the map controller can be selected by pressing the + sign. This will move the settings to other options for exploring the map.

The Browse Map by Data Type option allows you to add any of the data we have to the map, in any combination you would like (so long as it is technically possible). The map will be added to by the selections you make on the left hand side, and the data behind any particular point or area can be extracted by clicking on the map image over the point you want to explore. Clicking that point will bring up a box with as many tabs as you have data types selected on the left hand side. The specific data behind those data types will be explained within the box.

Useful Hints

- Data is presented on the map using:
 - Geographical points (such as the location of churches). These are displayed using a number of images or shapes on a particular point in the map
 - Boundary lines (such as a district or county boundary). These are displayed mainly as lines or dotted lines in different colours.
 - Coloured layers over the area of the map you are viewing. Data relating to the population of particular areas is displayed using colour scales. Different shades or colours indicate different levels of, for example, local wealth or religious affiliation.
- Some data will only appear at specific zoom levels on the map. This is because of the complexity of the data and to increase speed of use. If something doesn’t appear, zoom closer in until it does.
- Some data is only available in particular parts of Britain and will not appear on the map for those areas which the data sets we have do not cover. For example, the Child Wellbeing Index does not cover Wales or Scotland.
- You cannot present all data types at the same time. Although various boundaries can sometimes be added at the same time, as can most map points, two different types of data which require coloured layers to be added to the map cannot be viewed at the same time (such as the child wellbeing index and the IMD layers).
- If it is not immediately obvious what a particular option means or what the scale is for it, holding your mouse over the text in the map controller or clicking a “?” image next to your option will provide some basic information to assist you.
- Browsing the data works in a cascade system. Some types of data will require you selecting a general type first and then a specific data set after that by clicking a second button (e.g. Methodist Churches - Churches by Circuit).

3.1 Selecting the data you want to see

The data you can add to the map is categorised into:

- Church Data
 - Use this category to explore Methodist churches, schools, buildings and fellowship groups. Also use it to access Church of England data and Action for Children Project data.
- National Statistics
 - Use this to explore the demographics of the communities around our churches. This data category is divided into measures of wealth and poverty and measures taken from the census results of 2001 relating to religion, ethnicity and population density
- Rural/Urban Classifications
 - Use this category to explore where urban areas lie and how the country is categorised in terms of rural/urban makeup

- Administrative Boundaries
 - Use this to add to the map a range of boundary lines relating to administrative areas, such as wards or counties.

Once you have chosen the category of data you want to see, click the box next to it on the map controller. If you need to make a more specific choice, the options will drop down automatically under your selection. Click again against the data you want to see. In some cases you will need to do this twice.

3.2 Turning Data off

If you want to turn off one type of data, click the box next to it in the map controller and it will disappear from the map image.

If you want to turn off a whole category of data, you can deselect the box next to that category type rather than having to unselect every individual box.

3.3 What does the data mean?

If it is not immediately obvious what the data means, hold your mouse over the map controller. A pop up box will appear to explain the data behind the selection over which your cursor is held.

In some cases, when you select a data type, a scale will appear below it on the map controller, giving a basic explanation of what you should now see. This might range from what different sized points indicate about church membership sizes to what different coloured areas on the map mean about local child wellbeing.

When data is particularly complex (IMD, for example) it will have a “?” button next to it. Press this to be taken to another website that will explain more about this data set.

3.4 Exploring the data about a particular point on the map

If you would like to know more about a particular point on the map image, click on it. A box will appear explaining a range of things about the data which you have selected to appear from the map controller options.

The pop up box which appears will contain tabs across the top which allow you to change between the data you have selected. This will vary in type and content. Information about Methodist points or areas should be simple to understand. Other types will be more complex and may be of use only to the specialist user (such as the ISOA codes).

3.5 Exploring data about a particular church

The data we hold about churches is particularly detailed. When you click on a church point on the map image some basic information about the church will appear. Within that box will be a “Further Information” link. If you click this, a panel will appear below the map image providing far more detailed information about that church.

Along the top of the Further Information panel are a series of tabs, which will reveal different types of data about the church. This ranges from membership and attendance information to wider church activities, groups and outreach projects.

Unless otherwise stated, the information in this panel is the data provided by the church locally in the previous October Statistics for Mission reporting. If you notice any inaccuracies, please ask the church to contact statisticsformission@methodistchurch.org.uk to correct the error.

Users who have registered on the site (see section 5) can add photos, comments and links about the church and its activities to the “Church Record” tab, or to the record for any of the group or outreach activities reported.

3.6 “Additional Groups/Activities”

Registered users of the site (see section 5) can add new points to the map using the “Add a point” button at the top of the map screen. On this, see section 5. By selecting the Additional Groups/Activities button in the map controller, these additions to the map will be added.

3.7 Which churches appear on the Map?

The Methodist Church in Britain defines a church by the people who attend rather than the building in which they worship. For this reason, Statistics for Mission, and the web map, collect and display data about churches defined as worshipping communities with a church council. The data for classes of a worshipping community or the worship buildings other than the main church site (including other chapels) are therefore included in the one church record. For this reason, only the main church site for a worshipping community will be marked on the web map.

3.8 Is your church in the wrong place?

The location of churches is plotted on the web map using the postcode held for it in the main Church database. Churches are plotted at the middle point of that postcode unless we have more specific grid references for it. For this reason, they will not always be precisely in the spot of the map where the church building actually sits.

In most instances the difference will be minimal and of no importance. In others the difference might be greater. If this the case with your church, please let us know on statisticsformission@methodistchurch.org.uk with any changes that need to be made. At present, we are limited in terms of how often we can update church locations, so any changes will not take place immediately. They will, however, be stored and changed at the next available point.

4 “Districts/Circuits” function

This function is accessed by clicking on the grey bar in the map controller column labelled “Districts/Circuits”.

4.1 The purpose of this function

This function allows the user to select a particular district and automatically zoom to that area of Britain, with the district boundary marked. Once viewing a district, it allows the user to see the boundaries of one or more circuits within the district.

After selecting an area, the user can open the “Browse the map by data type” option in the map controller and add further data to the map.

4.2 Locating a particular District/Circuit

A district can be selected by clicking on the drop down list next to the “Select District” option. Once done, the map will zoom to the chosen district.

A list of the circuits will then appear in the map controller (scroll down if the list is longer than the visible part on the screen) and clicking on these will draw the circuit boundary of the circuit you have selected (though not zoom in to the circuit).

Multiple circuits can be selected by holding down the Control button on your keyboard and clicking on the names of all the circuits you would like to see.

5 Search Function

5.1 The purpose of the search function

The search function allows users of the web map to locate individual districts, circuits, churches or groups of churches (up to 1000) which conform to a piece of information which the map user has defined. The results will be in the form of a list inside the map controller column on the left hand side of the map, which, when clicked, can be used to take the map user to the locations identified.

5.2 Basic searches

You can search the map by clicking on one of the four search options presented in the map controller when the grey bar labelled “Search” has been selected.

The basic search function provides four options for a user search. In each case, you can add a word or part of a word to the text box and click the green “Search” button to identify a particular place, church, circuit or district which contains that word or fragment of a word.

As indicated in the map controller, users can search for location by postcode or the name of an area or town.

Searches will provide lists of results which are of the type identified in the search (i.e. a list of districts, circuits or churches). When searching for a place or postcode, the results will be in the form of churches. Clicking on one of the results will take the map image to that location at the appropriate zoom level.

When churches form the resulting list from a search, the user can click on an individual church name on the map controller. This will take the map image to a close zoom on that church and automatically show a pop up box for the church, providing some basic details. From this point, the user can select another church from the map controller, or browse the data for the area around the chosen church using the “Browse by Data Type” option.

5.3 Advanced Search

By selecting the “Advanced Search” option below the basic search options, the user can perform searches which relate to some of the more detailed data we hold about our churches and the areas in which they sit.

The results of advanced searches are always at church level and will provide a list of churches in the map controller column.

After clicking the advanced search option, a new pop up box will appear to allow the user to define the search criteria.

Using the drop down list provided in this pop up box, the user can select a data category (for example, “Church Sociodemography”). Once this is done, the user can perform a search on the map in the style of a database query, selecting the data type and what within that they want to search for.

The drop down lists for the search allow the user to build their own query of the map. These are divided into four pieces, of which the first three are always required.

“Fields”

- Use this drop down list to pick the type of data you want to search for. Data sets relate either to the areas in which churches might be present (e.g. “% Muslim” relates to the percentage of the local population which identifies as Muslim) or to the churches themselves (e.g. “Membership” refers to the membership number for churches).

“Operator”

- This allows the user to decide whether they want to search for something greater than, the same as, less than, or similar to a certain figure or word. Different operators will be appropriate for different types of data, depending on the search you perform.

“Value”

- This is a free text box for the user to select what they want to see. For example, if they have selected the field “membership” and the operator “=” a value should be added which is a number, creating a search for churches with a membership of that chosen number. If the user had selected the field “Circuit name” and the operator “like” they would then put in a value which is a word, not a number, to find churches in circuits with similar names to the word added.

“And/Or”

- This allows the user to add a second factor to their search, by adding a second line to the query. Selecting AND will provide final results of churches that conform to all lines of the query. Selecting OR will provide final results which conform to any of the lines.

Once you have built up your query of one or more lines in the pop up box, press the “Query” button at the bottom of that box and the search will run.

5.4 Limitations

The way the database behind the map works means that it can cope with searches producing up to 1000 results. Any search which produces more than this will return an error on the system.

5.5 Exporting lists of churches after performing a search

Once you have run either a basic or an advanced search and a list has appeared in the map controller, you can turn these results into a table, which allows you to see the information about the results in a more concise form.

This can be done by clicking the “Table View” button at the top of the results list.

The resulting table will provide a series of columns, giving different pieces of information about the churches included in the results of your search.

To edit which columns you see, click on the header of one of the columns and select the “Columns” option. You can tick each type of data on or off to edit the chart.

5.6 Exporting search results to Excel

Once you have created a list of the data you want to see about the churches in your search results (see 5.5 above) you can export this chart as an Excel spreadsheet by clicking the “Export to Excel” button at the bottom of the chart.

- **Some of the information on the map is experimental.** For example, Methodist ecclesiology has traditionally regarded the Church as without boundaries. In an age where defining areas of responsibility or service can be very useful for all sorts of planning, however, we have tried to indicate one possible way of identifying a circuit and district boundary. We have done this by plotting geographical middle points between all churches in different circuits and joining the dots. This will make more sense in some areas than others, but we'd appreciate your feedback.
- **We are limited to Britain for the time being** (missing Gibraltar and Malta, though including the Channel Isles and Isle of Man)
- **Wales and Cymru present a particular challenge**, with churches occupying in the same geographical areas. For this reason, circuit boundaries do no currently exist for Wales.
- **Which churches appear on the Map?** The Methodist Church in Britain defines a church by the people who attend rather than the building in which they worship. For this reason, Statistics for Mission, and the web map, collect and display data about churches defined as worshipping communities with a church council. The data for classes of a worshipping community or the worship buildings other than the main church site (including other chapels) are therefore included in the one church record. For this reason, only the main church site for a worshipping community will be marked on the web map.
- **Some data will only appear at specific zoom levels on the map.** This is because of the complexity of the data and to increase speed of use. If something doesn't appear, zoom closer in until it does.
- **Some data is only available in particular parts of Britain** and will not appear on the map for those areas which the data sets we have do not cover. For example, the Child Wellbeing Index does not cover Wales or Scotland.

7 Adding new data to the map

It is possible to add new types of data to the map. This could be large data sets, such as the locations of projects within a Britain-wide charity, or individual points, such as a circuit event or project. Part of the web map's purpose is to allow people across the Church to demonstrate to the rest of the Church interesting information about themselves and their communities.

7.1 The ways to add data

If you would like to add a large data set, please contact the research team at Methodist Church House on statisticsformission@methodistchurch.org.uk to discuss whether this would be possible.

To add a new point to the map, you can register as a user and provide some basic details about an event, project or activity, and mark it in its location.

7.2 Registering as a user

To register as a user, click the blue "Sign In" button on the top, right hand side of the map image. Provide your details in the box which appears and click to say you accept the terms and conditions of use.

7.3 Adding a new group/activity

Once you have registered, a new button will appear at the top of the map called "Add a point". If you select this, and then find your desired location on the map, clicking on that location will add a new point. You will be asked a series of details about the group or activity you wish to add and this information will be sent for approval. Once it has been approved, your new point will be added, with its details, to the map under the "Additional Groups/Activities" option within the Browse the Map By Data Type option in the map controller panel.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ADDING A PROJECT OR ACTIVITY TO THE MAP WILL NOT ADD THIS TO YOUR CHURCH'S STATISTICS FOR MISSION RECORD. ANY FORMAL GROUP OR PROJECT OF A PARTICULAR CHURCH SHOULD ALSO BE REPORTED THE FOLLOWING OCTOBER THROUGH YOUR CHURCH'S LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION TEAM.

8. Browser Compatibility

Although the web map will work on all relatively modern web browsers, its appearance and functions are better suited to some than to others. Work is currently being done to expand the compatibility of the map and so details of the best browsers to use will follow in the next version of these guidance notes.